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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 002125

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: TAIWAN'S PREPARATIONS FOR WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY MEETING

REF: A. SECSTATE 84885

[B](#). GENEVA 1142

[C](#). BEIJING 7300

Classified By: AIT Director Douglas H. Paal, Reason 1.4 (b/d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. AIT's Deputy Director met with John Chen, Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) International Organizations Director General, to discuss issues related to Taiwan, the International Health Regulations (IHR) and the World Health Assembly (WHA). Chen and a delegation will travel to Geneva on May 12 to spearhead Taiwan's 9th bid to obtain observer status in the WHA. The Deputy Director encouraged Chen to stay focused on the IHR four-part "package" already agreed to by the PRC and Taiwan last February and not to get bogged down squabbling over nomenclature clauses that could derail progress already made. Chen responded that while Taipei understands this, nomenclature is nonetheless important to Taiwan and he could not guarantee his superiors would agree to the suggestion. Chen also discussed Taiwan's proposed changes for revising the draft WHA resolution in para 6. Action request for EAP/TC and UNMIGeneva in para 8. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) In a meeting on May 10, The Deputy Director assured Chen and MOFA Section Chief for UN Affairs Bob Chien that the USG will continue to work on Taiwan's behalf to ensure the IHR "package" is adopted. Chen responded that no progress has been made on the fourth component of the package, a WHA resolution calling for the WHO Director-General to implement the IHRs universally. Taipei, he continued, expects the fourth component to be included in next week's discussions in Geneva but currently has no information on its status. He explained that Taipei fears if progress is not made on the fourth component, Beijing might claim the package unworkable. The Deputy Director responded that the PRC had agreed in principle to this package last February in Geneva and that we expect Beijing to abide by the four components. Chen asked the Deputy Director to query Washington and Geneva to make sure the fourth component is not being hindered by the third component, which provides for an exchange of letters between WHO and Taiwan on how they deal with each other on IHR-related matters. The Deputy Director promised to convey the question to Washington and Geneva.

[1](#)3. (C) Chen then raised the nomenclature issue, explaining that this is very important to Taipei. The Deputy Director told him that Taiwan has much to gain from the four-part agreement, which would be a very positive step forward for Taiwan, adding that it is important to be as pragmatic and flexible as possible while the "package" framework is being finalized. Chen responded that Taipei will be flexible, but not if the dignity of Taiwan's people is compromised. He could not, moreover, assure AIT that his superiors would be willing to abandon negotiations on the nomenclature issue. The Deputy Director pointed out that with limited time and diplomatic capital available, Taiwan must choose which objectives are most important.

[1](#)4. (C) Chen then explained that if the situation in Geneva sours for Taiwan, Taipei plans to force a vote on Taiwan's bid for observer status in the WHA. The Deputy Director questioned the logic of this tactic and asked Chen what Taiwan would gain by forcing such a vote. Chen replied that it would publicly show which countries oppose Taiwan and alert the world to Taiwan's unfair exclusion from the WHA. It would also, he believed, demonstrate to the world that support for Taiwan is increasing, noting that new countries that may support Taiwan this year include Nauru, Mongolia, and possibly some African nations. The Deputy Director advised Chen that not pressing for a vote might be the most practical option unless there are clear indications of strong support, which, currently, there are not.

[1](#)5. (C) Focusing on Taipei's goals for the WHA meetings, Chen stated that Taiwan wants to be identified as a separate health territory authority similar to that agreed for Taiwan's WTO accession. He proposed using the "separate customs territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu" or the TPKM agreement as a model for Taiwan's WHA observer bid.

He added that they would reluctantly also agree to "Chinese Taipei" as a short form of the name. Taiwan, he said, also wants its CDC to serve as the focal point for Taiwan in the WHA. Finally, Chen asked the Deputy Director to pass a request to Washington that the USG serve as Taiwan's "case manager" for the 22 debate on its WHA observer bid. Chen explained that Taiwan needs an experienced party to temper debate among the PRC and Taiwan. The USG, he added, would ensure that Taiwan is fairly represented.

16. (C) Chen also passed to the Deputy Director the following Taiwan request for revisions to the draft WHA "Revision of the IHR" resolution:

(Begin quote)

Regarding the draft WHA resolution on the Revision of the International Health Regulations (IHR), it is proposed to insert the following after point 5.(6) "to take all appropriate actions to facilitate the universal application of the revised International Health Regulations" (in sequence of our preference):

1) including inviting Taiwan to attend all relevant meetings and conference convened by the Organization, accepting the CDC-Taiwan as an IHR Focal Point, and inviting Taiwan to assume the rights and obligations of IHR Participants.

or

2) including inviting the health authorities exercising sole effective control over health situation in all territories which may be affected by the diseases subject to the Regulations to attend all relevant meetings and conferences convened by the Organization, accepting their respective IHR Focal Points, and inviting them to assume the rights and obligations of IHR Participants.

or

3) including providing ample access for relevant meetings and conferences in pursuit of the universal application.

(End quote)

17. (C) Comment: Taipei has a good opportunity to make significant progress with the IHR four-part agreement. The challenge is to keep Taiwan focused on real, achievable progress via the four components instead of squabbling over nomenclature, a point which AIT is not confident can be achieved. Some of Taiwan's senior officials, including Foreign Minister Mark Chen, have stated that Taipei will not compromise if the nomenclature issue cannot be resolved. Such an all or nothing approach could derail the months of hard work that went into hammering out the four-part agreement on Taiwan's behalf. AIT is hopeful that common sense will prevail among Taiwan officials next week in Geneva, and that Taipei will work along the lines of the IHR four components.

18. (C) Action Requests. Please provide instructions on how we should respond to the following questions posed by Taiwan's MOFA:

(1) The status of the fourth component of the IHR "package" and if the third component is hindering passage of the fourth component.

(2) Taipei's request that the USG serve as Taiwan's "case manager" for the 22 debate on its WHA observer bid.

(3) Taiwan's proposed changes for revising the draft WHA resolution.

PAAL